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United States Department of Agriculture

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET Agriculture

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

CHILD'S FOOD HABITS IMPORTANT TO HEALTH

Years ago -- after the disappearance of our national frontier -- thinking men pointed out the necessity for preserving our natural resources. As a result of their foresight we started conservation programs -- to save our wild game, our forests, and our mineral wealth.

Later, other farseeing men and women reminded us of another resource even more important to conserve -- the health of the nation's children. And because of their influence came the first positive steps towards improving child health in the United States.

Annually, since 1928, the President of the United States has issued a proclamation making the first of May, National Child Health Day. This year, since May Day fell on Sunday, many communities are celebrating a day later. And this year, too, for the first time, the week beginning with May Day and ending with Mothers' Day is being observed as Better Parenthood Week.

In any program of health-building or health-preserving the importance of diet can not be emphasized too strongly. From the very first the expectant mother must see to it that her diet is well fortified by the "protective" foods. For a diet low in some important nutrient can cause distressing results both to the mother and to the developing baby.

The right food for a child will furnish material for good bones, sound teeth, and a strong, sturdy body. In addition, it will provide sufficient reserves for growth and safety.

The diet of a very young child and that of an older one are different mainly in the way food is prepared and in the amounts served at the various ages. Usually a child's appetite will guide him to eat enough -- but less often will it guide him to eat all the right kinds of food.

In planning the diet of a child, milk is a good starting point. It is well known as an economical source of valuable food elements. A child should have at least a pint of milk a day, preferably a quart. Most nutrition specialists recommend a quart a day during the years when the child is rapidly growing and his bones and teeth are developing, providing it does not crowd out other essential food.

Vegetables and fruits are especially important for their minerals and vitamins. They also add interesting color and flavor. An adequate vegetable allowance includes at least two servings of vegetables each day in addition to potatoes.

It's a good idea to have one of the vegetables each day served raw or quickly-cooked. And serve leafy green and yellow vegetables often.

It's not a bad plan to have potatoes at least once a day because they are an inexpensive food that contain appreciable amounts of some of the valuable minerals and vitamins. But if a potato is not served each day then there should be a corresponding increase in other fresh vegetables and fruit.

Children need a good variety of fruits, both raw and cooked. Two fruits a day aid good nutrition. If possible, have one of these either a citrus fruit or tomatoes.

Eggs and meat are good building foods. The yolk of an egg is one of the first foods given to supplement the milk diet of the very young child. Young children should have either eggs or meat each day. Older children may have both more frequently.

Besides potatoes, cereals and bread are the important energy foods because of the starch they contain. Serve a wholesome cereal dish at least once a day. Entire-grain cereals are good for growing children because of the minerals and vitamins they contain. Each meal may well include some bread.

Children need some fats in the daily diet. Fats are the most concentrated body fuels and are therefore a good source of energy. Butter, cod-liver oil, and some other fish oils are also good sources of two important vitamins. Some margarines have recently had these vitamins added as their labels state.

No diet for children would be complete without a few simple sweets. But use these with discretion, at the end of a meal. Served in between or at the beginning of meals, sweets take away the child's appetite for essential foods.

That in general is a pattern for a child's diet. And a homemaker who sees that the child gets these basic foods is starting him well on his way to health. But her responsibility does not end there. For the best selection and best prepared of foods will lose part of their value if the child refuses to eat or just pecks at them disinterestedly.

For this reason, good food habits should be established early. When a child becomes accustomed gradually to the taste, texture, and temperature of a new food he will learn to like it. Serve small portions of food at a time in order not to discourage children at the outset. And at first, serve children only one or two foods at a time.

In general the less talk there is about food at the table the better. Adopt the casual attitude of expecting the child to enjoy what is set before him. A regular schedule for meals, exercise, and sleep will help to keep the appetite normal.

When a child has been guided from the first to eat the right foods, he has formed a habit that will be the foundation of good nutrition for him throughout life. And that is one way of carrying out the 1938 Child Health Day slogan, "Speed Children on the Road to Health".

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

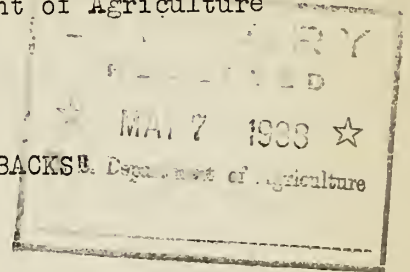
Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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WITH EQUIPMENT IN ORDER

CANNING SUFFERS NO "SET-BACKS". Department of Agriculture

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Canning time -- that expected "season" which has a way of taking even well regulated households completely by surprise -- will soon come with a rush in a majority of farm communities through the country.

Garden foods must be canned when they are ready. A day's delay in gathering, or a few hours' delay in processing may be too long.

It pays a homemaker to check over her canning equipment beforehand. For equipment is a part of the canning plan -- just as both canning and gardening are a part of the bigger home plan -- the plan to use the resources of the farm to the best advantage for the family's benefit. A well-planned garden provides fresh vegetables throughout the growing season of any normal year, and allows for a surplus of those which are most nutritious and most easily preserved for winter use.

First in the line of canning equipment comes the steam pressure cooker. This is an essential piece of equipment for the safe home canning of nonacid vegetables and meats, experts of the Bureau of Home Economics of the U. S. Department of Agriculture advise. If the homemaker has no pressure cooker she may be able to borrow one through the community canning center, or the home demonstration agent. Pressure cookers are often owned jointly by a group of neighbors, when the cost is

too much for one family alone. If a pressure cooker is not available the homemaker should never attempt to can nonacid products by any other method. It is better, then, to use other preserving processes, drying, brining, curing.

"The use of pressure cookers is increasing rapidly throughout the nation," says Miss Miriam Birdseye, Extension Nutritionist of the Department, who has just returned from a three months' tour through ten southern states. "Southern home canners were among the first to appreciate the use of the pressure cooker for canning nonacid vegetables and meats."

For those who will buy pressure cookers this year, the Bureau of Home Economics offers these suggestions.

Select a canner that is substantially built and large enough for canning -- a pressure canner, not merely a pressure cooker. The 18-quart to 30-quart sizes are most satisfactory. Cookers smaller than this are much less suitable for canning, because of the difficulty of regulating the pressure. Sudden changes in pressure cause liquid to flow from the jars with a loss of food value, a less juicy product and one that will not keep as well as if covered by liquid in the jar. The canning capacity of the 18-quart size is five glass quart jars, eight pints or 14 No. 2 tins. The 30-quart size holds 8 quarts, 20 pints or 19 No. 2 tins.

Be sure that the top fits perfectly and is held tightly in place by clamps or a heavy band. Pressure cookers are usually of aluminum, but some of those now on the market are tin-plated iron. These are heavier and require more careful handling to prevent melting of the tin plate. The top and cooker can not be ground to fit, as the aluminum ones are, so a large rubber gasket is used to form a tight seal. This gasket must be replaced periodically.

All pressure cookers are equipped with a petcock, for exhausting the air, and with a safety valve as well as a pressure gage. (Sometimes the petcock and safety valve are combined.)



If the family already owns a pressure cooker, make sure it is in good running order. Pressure gages often fail to register accurately after much use, hence the home canner is advised to have the pressure gage on her cooker tested at the beginning of every season -- or more often if the canner is in constant use. Consult the home demonstration agent as to procedure. Follow the instructions of the manufacturer in caring for the canner, being especially careful to keep the surface between the cooker and cover clean and smooth. But do not scour it with harsh abrasives. Keep the gage and safety valve open and clean.

For processing acid products like fruits, tomatoes, ripe pimientos, and rhubarb, the temperatures obtainable in the water bath are sufficient. The high temperature of the pressure canner tends to damage fruit flavor, color, and texture. For a water bath, a boiler, a bucket or a large kettle will do, provided the vessel has a tight cover, a rack or false bottom, and is large enough to allow for one or two inches of boiling water over the tops of the jars.

If buying new containers, they may be glass or tin. Glass jars are best for the small-quantity home canner, because canning with tin means the purchase of a machine for sealing the cans. But for families that use several hundred quarts of canned vegetables and fruits every year, tin cans have several advantages. The first cost of the tins is less, (although cans may be used satisfactorily only once). Use of tin usually shortens the processing period because heat penetrates metal more quickly than glass. Also more tins will fit into the cooker at one time. Tins may be plunged into water to prevent overcooking the contents. They won't break and are easy to handle and store.

Glass jars may be used year after year, with only the cost of new rubbers on tops to be considered. Glass, of course, has a decided advantage from the standpoint of eye appeal. Many home canners take a pride in the beauty of their "pack and tin cans are not good exhibition material.

If the homemaker has decided in favor of tin, and is in the market for a sealing machine, she should select one that is substantially built. It is poor economy to buy a sealer which is not heavy enough to stand up under years of wear.

On glass jars, the market offers a wide choice. Several different types, designed for different tastes and different uses, are frequently sold by one manufacturer. Glass tops should be used for pickles, and wide-mouth jars for large fruits.

Glass jars require new rubber rings every year. The home canner should make sure that her rubber rings are new and of good quality. For a simple test, double the ring and press it tightly between the fingers. The rubber should not crack. A good rubber ring should stretch to twice its length and snap back into its original shape.

If there are enough jars for all the vegetables and fruit/^{which} the family has a right to expect -- are there enough caps to go around? Don't count any that do not fit tightly, or are dented or chipped.

With pressure cooker and all equipment ready, the home canner will welcome the first basket of new green peas.

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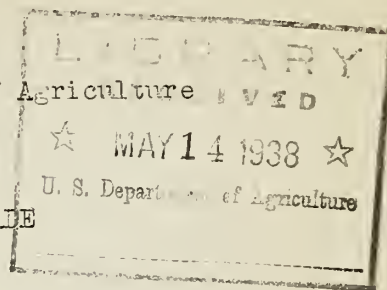
WASHINGTON, D.C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

STRAWBERRIES LEAD THE FRUIT PARADE



In any parade of early fruits the strawberry is easily a leading attraction. For when many other fruits are just past blossoming, strawberries are ripe and coming to market in abundance.

So far this season strawberries have been considerably more plentiful than last. And the prospects are good for them to continue as the crimson tide of the strawberry season follows the course of the sun in its swing northward. This year there are more acres planted to strawberries than ever in the states that produce them late in the season.

Strawberry shoppers today judge their purchases by higher standards than did those of twenty years ago. In that time plant breeders have developed varieties of larger, firmer, sweeter berries. And there are better methods of sending them to market.

Historically, the strawberry is one of the "younger" fruits. It has been cultivated for only about six centuries. Found growing wild in America by the early explorers the strawberry has benefited by travel. Early it went to Europe—returned later a much-improved berry. Now it grows in every country in the world that has a temperate climate.

Plant breeders are constantly in search of strawberry perfection. Today they are working for berries that have greater resistance to disease—to drought—



have better eating quality--are more suited to preserve making, jam making, and preservation by freezing. All these qualities they are trying to develop by scientific crossing of different types and selection.

One of the most promising of all the new varieties is Blakemore, introduced by scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture in 1929. According to George M. Darrow, one of the originators, the Blakemore was selected from hundreds of other seedlings as the best berry for making preserves. It stands shipping exceptionally well and has already replaced older varieties in some sections. In the South it is becoming a leading commercial strawberry.

Another new variety is the Dorsett, a mild flavored berry that not uncommonly grows so large it takes as few as twenty to make a quart. The Fairfax is also a new variety that grows exceptionally large. But so far, neither these nor other new strawberry varieties have rivalled the success of the Blakemore.

With plant breeders at work producing new and better strawberries it looks promising for future crops of this most popular of all small fruits. But the immediate concern of most shoppers is the quality of the current season's berries as they appear in the baskets at the market. Here again the men who know strawberries are helpful. They tell some of the outward evidences of good or poor strawberries whatever the variety.

Usually in shopping for strawberries eye appeal counts for a lot. And, according to experts, that is as it should be. For better berries show their quality in a fresh, clean, bright appearance. They have a solid red color all over and are without excess moisture, dirt, or trash. The green caps are attached. Both caps and stems are a bright green.

Strawberry quality may be marked down for a number of reasons. Berries may be overripe or immature. A container stained a deep red is a warning flag to purchasers. For it usually means that the berries have been mashed, or they are



overripe and leaky. Other overripe berries may be shrunken and dull in appearance. Berries with white spots--especially on the tips--were picked too soon, before they were mature.

Decay and mold are other signs of poor strawberries. Neither of these may show up on the berries atop the basket, but be evident when you examine those further down.

Buy only enough strawberries for immediate needs. They are among the most perishable of all the fruits. To keep them overnight, look them over and pick out any berries that show signs of softening or mold, then place in a colander or other ventilated container and put them in a refrigerator or other cool place.

Wash berries just before you're ready to use them. To keep them from mashing, rinse the strawberries carefully, a few at a time, in a pan of water. Do not let the water fall on them with force. Lift the berries out of the water rather than pour the water off--that way the sand or soil that settles to the bottom won't lodge again on the berries. Do not let the berries stay in water any longer than necessary or they'll lose color and flavor. Remove caps only after the berries are thoroughly washed.

When raw, strawberries are at their luscious and nutritive best. Just a little heat will spoil the fine berry flavor. And heat also destroys the vitamin C for which strawberries are an excellent source.

To many persons the word "strawberry" is synonymous with shortcake. Others think immediately of their favorite strawberries with cream. Or they may like choice berries best, served with their green caps and stems attached--circling a mound of powdered sugar as "strawberries au naturel". Since the berries are so good in themselves they need no fancy fixing.

One dish that's decorative and delicious, yet simple is Strawberries Supreme. Select large, very ripe berries. After they are washed, capped, and thoroughly

dried off fold them into sweetened, stiffly whipped cream until every berry is coated. Serve at once, before the juice is drawn from the berries and thins the cream.

Strawberries are also good cut and combined with fresh pineapple or bananas to make a fruit cup. Orange juice poured over cut strawberries makes a simple fruit cocktail. And they are one of the season's best garnishes for many desserts and salads.

The ideal preserving strawberries are easy to cap, medium sized, and firm. They have a rich flavor and a light, bright-red color that does not turn dark with preserving. The berries are uniform in size so that they will cook quickly. And they are firm-ripe rather than soft-ripe.

Following are two recipes for strawberry preserves. For best results not more than 6 or 8 pounds of fruit should be handled at one time.

Strawberry Preserves

Select large, firm, tart berries. Wash, drain, and remove caps. For each pound of fruit use 1 pound of sugar. Combine the fruit and sugar in alternate layers and let stand 8 to 10 hours or overnight before cooking. While heating to boiling, stir carefully. Boil rapidly for 15 to 20 minutes or until the sirup is somewhat thick, taking care to prevent burning. Remove the scum. Fill hot sterilized jars three-fourths full of the berries. Add enough sirup to completely fill the containers and seal.

Strawberry Sun Preserves

These preserves can be made only if there is sufficiently hot sunshine to cause rapid evaporation.

Prepare choice strawberries as in the recipe above. For each pound of these choice berries allow 1 pound of sugar and 1 teaspoon lemon juice. Prepare a sirup from the juice of less perfect berries and sugar. To do this crush small berries, then stir them while cooking for about 3 minutes. Strain. To each pound of choice berries allow one-fourth cup of this juice and 1 pound of sugar. Add the sugar to the juice, stir, and heat slowly until the sugar is entirely dissolved. Add the berries to the sirup and simmer for 3 to 5 minutes.

Drain the berries from the sirup and place about an inch apart on shallow enameled pans or china platters. Boil the sirup until it is fairly thick; that is, for about 10 minutes, or to 221 degrees F. Remove the scum, add the lemon juice, and pour the sirup in a thin layer over the berries. Cover with window glass propped up about one-fourth inch from the pans. Place in the sun for 2 or 3 days or until the sirup has jellied. Take inside at night, and after each day's sunning turn the berries over. Without reheating put the preserves into hot sterilized jars and seal.

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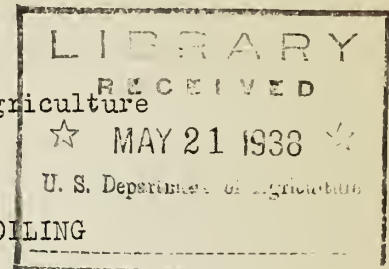
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THE MARKET BASKET
by
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SPRING LAMB PLENTIFUL NOW--
EXCELLENT FOR ROASTING AND BROILING



An important part of many a trip to market is a session in front of the butcher's showcase. And there the woman who studies the meat situation intelligently from week to week soon picks up some useful shopping facts. She learns the best time to buy different meats--when supplies are usually large--when quality is best and prices reasonable.

Lamb, she soon finds, is available the year around, but there is a seasonal difference in the kind that is most plentiful. For instance, it's in May, June, and July that "spring lambs" come to market in large quantities. Then from July to late fall most of the lambs on the market have been fattened on grass. And the season for lambs fattened in feed lots begins during the winter months--dovetails into the "spring" lamb season.

On the market now are both "spring" lambs and "fed" lambs. It is difficult for even the most experienced meat shoppers to distinguish between these two kinds. But the way lambs have been fattened does show up in the appearance of the meat. Also "spring lamb" is lighter in weight and carries less fat than "fed" lamb.

Spring lamb is usually smaller and lighter in weight than fed lamb because the animal is slaughtered when it is from three to five months old. That early in life, a lamb has had practically no other food besides milk. The fed lambs, on the other hand, are 10 to 12 months old and have been fattened on grain and other



feeds. Meat from these older lambs is often well-marbled with fat. Cuts are heavier and larger than those of spring lamb.

Now an unusually large proportion of lamb on the market is this lighter spring lamb. According to the men who keep records of the nation's meat supply, this season has been one of the best ever for growing early spring lambs. Prices for them have been lower than they were a year ago. And so far, they have been of unusually good quality.

Shopping for lamb is fairly simple. Since the animal is so small, cuts are not so numerous as are cuts of beef or pork. It isn't necessary to buy lamb according to its tenderness because all lamb is tender and is suitable for roasting or broiling. However, many homemakers like to use small pieces in stews, for braising, ground up for patties, or in other similar dishes.

Cuts of lamb most in demand are from the leg, the loin, and the ribs. But with proper cooking the less expensive cuts--from shoulder, breast, flank, and neck--make dishes that are just as savory.

Lamb cuts are convenient to serve. Chops are a good size for individual servings. And a leg, breast, or shoulder can usually be found the right size for a family roast. Often it's good economy to buy a roast that furnishes more meat than you'll need for one meal. Cold roast lamb is a delicacy in itself. And there are a number of appetizing hot dishes to make use of left-overs.

As for cooking and serving, here are three general hints from women who've had a lot of experience in lamb cooking. First, they say, serve lamb either piping hot or cold--no lukewarm in between. This is the rule for all meats but it's especially important for lamb, because the fat on lamb hardens at a higher temperature than the fat on other meats.



Another peculiarity of lamb is the fell--the thin papery covering on the outside. Formerly, cooks removed this parchment-like material from every cut of lamb because they thought it affected the flavor of the meat. But as far as recent tests have shown, this fell does not affect flavor. Whether it is left on or taken off is a matter of convenience and appearance.

Fell is usually left on leg of lamb for roasting. It helps to reduce shrinkage and cooking time. And it also helps to hold the leg in shape. The appearance of chops is improved by taking it off.

Those who cook much lamb should explore the possibilities of boning. Many times boning makes a cut much easier to cook and carve. A shoulder, for instance, which contains irregularly shaped bones is ordinarily an awkward roast to carve. But when it is boned there is a convenient pocket for stuffing and it's easy to carve. Of course, the bones and trimmings removed will make excellent jelly and soup.

Roasting and broiling are the ways to cook lamb since practically all cuts are tender. And here, as in all meat cookery, the cardinal principle is "cook at a moderate temperature at least most of the time". High temperatures cause the meat to shrink and become dry--make it lose juice and flavor.

Two main points in roasting tender cuts of meat are "use no lid on the pan" and "add no water". This way you avoid steaming the meat and thus losing juice or flavor. And of course, when meat is already tender, it's not necessary to apply steam for cooking. To keep a roast from sticking to the pan bottom, place it on a rack. If there is a fat side to the roast, place that up so the roast will be self-basting. If the roast is fairly lean, lay a few pieces of bacon or salt pork over it.

Common cuts of lamb for roasting are leg, shoulder, and breast. Shoulder is usually a less expensive roast. And breast of lamb makes a smaller roast that

takes only a comparatively short time to cook. Usually, it is a nice size for serving two or three persons. Crown roast and saddle of lamb are two more expensive roasts generally reserved for special occasions.

Chops may be broiled either by direct heat or panbroiled. "No lid on the pan and no added water" are also the rules for panbroiling lamb chops. For panbroiling be sure to have the pan sizzling hot at the beginning. And pour off excess fat from time to time to keep the chops from frying.

If you want fancy chops, buy double ones -- those cut twice the usual thickness. Have them boned and rolled. Wrap in a piece of bacon and broil. Or have rib chops "Frenched" by trimming the edges bare.

Lamb left-overs are adaptable to many dishes. They may be used as other left-over meats--in croquettes--to stuff peppers--as the filling for French toasted sandwiches. One of the best of all is curried lamb.

To make this, cook celery and onion in a little butter. Then add chopped, cooked, lean lamb, seasonings, and brown gravy or broth. Stir until well mixed and hot. Seasonings may be varied, but tabasco sauce, celery, and onions go well with the curry. Serve with a border of flaky boiled rice. Garnish with parsley.

Little tidbits or small pieces of uncooked lean lamb are just right for using in stew--in meat loaf--patties--for braising and serving with noodles.

As for lamb accompaniments, there is a great variety possible. Mint, of course, is the old favorite. But jelly of tart currant, guava, or plum go just as well. Horseradish, spiced conserves, pickles, and other relishes also add desirable tartness. Onions, spinach, string beans, asparagus, turnips, and cauliflower are vegetables that go with lamb as well as the traditional green peas.

